



Kermit Cromack Jr.

August 16, 1940 - April 21, 2026

Kermit Cromack, Jr.

August 16, 1940 -- April 21, 2026
(85 Years old)

Faithful Husband, Father, Educator and Catholic

Born August 16, 1940 in Brownsville, Texas on the border with Mexico

Kermit loved his parents Kermit Sr and Bea Cromack and his brothers Kim and Kevin and his sisters Ellen, Karen and Kathy. Young Kermit loved his grandfather Bert and would follow him to help in their citrus orchard to be with nature and trees.

He loved nature and would spend his free time hiking, climbing trees and playing in the lakes and fields nearby.

In his senior year year in high school he won a 4-month trip on a merchant ship around the world for his essay on the United States Merchant Marine. He visited Spain, Egypt, Sudan, Suez canal, India and Hawaii. Amazing trip for a young man!

Kermit earned a PhD in forestry science and moved to Corvallis Oregon to become a professor of forestry at OSU for 35 years. He taught future forestry teachers from all over the world.

He married Angie Silva in February 1965. She was the love of his life. They had two fine sons: Kevin Teo (1967) and Matthew Edward (1976-1996).

They were a close knit and faithful Catholic family practicing their faith for over 60 years. Angie preceded Kermit in death in November 2023. Kermit's legacy lives on through his family, friends, students faith and love of God.

Previous Events

Memorial Mass

APR **24**. 12:00 PM (PT)

St. Mary's Catholic Church
501 NW 25th St.
Corvallis, OR

Tribute Wall

SH

“Kermit was one of the nicest persons I have ever met. When I started my postdoctoral scholar position at Oregon State University (OSU) in 1989, he greeted me with a smile and asked if I needed anything. Before arriving at OSU, I was well aware of Kermit's seminal work on forest litter decomposition in the eastern USA that was part of his Ph.D. research. My Ph.D. research was also focused on the controls on forest decomposition rates, but in the western USA, so we naturally had common interests and a platform for scientific interaction. Although I never collaborated with Kermit, he often provided guidance to me during my postdoctoral research and he was always supportive of both me and my research. I am so grateful that Kermit and I had an opportunity to get to know each other personally and interact professionally. Although we have not been in continuous touch over the years since I left OSU in 1991, we have interacted at scientific meetings and over email from time to time. My condolences to Kermit's family and friends. I am sure that Kermit is finding truffles in heaven. He is greatly missed.

Stephen C. Hart - May 09 at 01:31 AM

DB

“1 file added to the tribute wall



Dan Binkley - April 23 at 05:09 PM

DB

“ I had the grand fortune to be Kermit's first graduate student. What a perfect experience -- he had such broad curiosity, perennial enthusiasm, always encouraging... In the acknowledgements in my thesis, I wrote:

"If the Graduate School had a trophy for Advisor of the Year, I guarantee that I would somehow see that it was given to Kermit this year."

Here's a photo of Kermit visiting my research site on Vancouver Island in 1980, and two from his retirement celebration at OSU.

Thank you, Kermit.

Dan Binkley



Dan Binkley - April 23 at 04:41 PM

JE

Kermit was my PhD advisor from 1985 until 1990 working on Armillaria attack on stressed forest conifers and carbon and nutrient cycling in ectomycorrhizal mats. He was always supportive of my research and ideas. He supported the research of many other graduate students, post-doctorates and scientists in the environmental sciences.

Kermit was intelligent, honorable and kind. Endlessly curious about anything scientific. We had long discussions about a wide variety of environmental topics but especially mycorrhizal mats and carbon cycling. In describing Dr. Cromack's brilliance, Dr. Phill Sollins once said. Kermit talks to microbes. That doesn't bother me because a lot of scientists talk to microbes. What bothers me about Kermit is that microbes answer him.

Kermit won a scholarship in high school to travel around the world on a merchant freighter. He enjoyed experiencing diverse cultures and meeting new people. While he was in India he met Sister Teresa in an agricultural field.

He told me on his first date with Angie that he picked her up in his 1955 Chevy. After learning this, I thought of Kermit as a totally cool grad student driving around with his beautiful girlfriend just as much as a brilliant professor. It didn't take very long before they were married.

Kermit was devoted to his family, and they were foremost in his thoughts. He kept me up to date on Angie's and Kevin's interests and projects. Angie and Kermit built houses and western bluebird feeders. He enjoyed watching them and their antics in his neighborhood. He also built bat houses to ensure bat survival in and around Corvallis.

He set an example of not only how to be an excellent scientist but more importantly how to be an outstanding human being. I was fortunate to have Kermit Cromack as my PhD advisor.

Jim Entry - June 13 at 10:51 AM